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Page 8

Hurricane Idalia unleashes fury on Florida and Georgia, swamping a wide stretch of coast

By TERRY SPENCER

Associated Press

PERRY, Fla. (AP) — Hurricane Idalia made landfall Wednesday in Florida as a Category 3 storm and unleashed devastation along a wide stretch of the Gulf Coast, submerging homes and vehicles, turning streets into rivers, unmooring small boats and downing power lines before sweeping into Georgia. Almost 438,000 customers in Florida and Georgia lost power while rushing water covered streets near the coast. As the eye moved inland, high winds shredded signs, sent sheet metal flying and snapped tall trees. Idalia came ashore in the lightly populated Big Bend region, where the Florida Panhandle curves into the peninsula. It made landfall near Keaton Beach at 7:45 a.m. as a high-end Category 3 hurricane with maximum sustained winds near 125 mph (205 kph).

Continued on Page 2



Rescue workers with Tidewater Disaster Response wade through a tidal surge on SW 358 Highway while looking for people in need of help after the Steinhatchee River flooded on Wednesday, Aug 30, 2023, in Steinhatchee, Fla., following the arrival of Hurricane Idalia.

Associated Press

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Hurricane Idalia unleashes fury on Florida and Georgia, swamping a wide stretch of coast

Continued from Front

As of midday Wednesday, there were no confirmed storm deaths in Florida, although fatal traffic accidents in two counties may end up being storm-related, Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis said at a news conference.

A 59-year-old man driving a pickup truck in heavy rain veered off the road outside Gainesville. In Dade City, north of Tampa, a 40-year-old man lost control of his pickup and crashed into a tree, authorities said.

State officials, 5,500 National Guardsman and rescue crews were in search-and-recovery mode, inspecting bridges, clearing toppled trees and looking for anyone in distress in one of Florida's most rural regions. Because of the remoteness, search teams may need more time to complete their work compared with past hurricanes in more urban areas, said Kevin Guthrie, director of the Florida Department of



Daniel Dickert wades through water in front of his home where the Steinhatchee River overflowed on Wednesday, Aug. 30, 2023, in Steinhatchee, Fla., after the arrival of Hurricane Idalia.

Associated Press

Emergency Management. "You may have two houses on a 5-mile (8-kilometer) road so it's going to take some time," Guthrie said. On the island of Cedar Key, downed trees and debris blocked roads, and propane tanks exploded.

RJ Wright stayed behind on Cedar Key so he could check on elderly neighbors. He hunkered down with friends in a motel and when it was safe, walked outside into chest-high water. It could have been a lot worse for the island,

which juts into the Gulf, since it didn't take a direct hit, he said.

"It got pretty gnarly for a while, but it was nothing compared to some of the other storms," Wright said. The system remained a hurricane as it crossed into Georgia with top winds of 90 mph (150 mph), after drenching Florida mostly to the east of Tallahassee. Forecasters said it would punish the Carolinas overnight as a tropical storm. Some models had predicted that Idalia could circle southward toward land again after that, but the National Hurricane Center predicted it would move deeper into the Atlantic this weekend.

In the town of Perry, the wind blew out store windows, tore siding off buildings and overturned a gas station canopy. Interstate 275 in Tampa was partially flooded, and toppled power lines closed northbound Interstate 75 just south of Valdosta, Georgia.

About 200 miles to the south of where Idalia made landfall, the roads around the chic shops and restaurants of St. Armands Circle in the Sarasota area were underwater.

Astounded by the flooding that turned Tampa's Bayshore Boulevard into

a river, Bill Hall watched a paddleboarder ride along the major thoroughfare.

"This is actually unbelievable," Hall said. "I haven't seen anything like this in years." In Tallahassee, Florida's capital, the power went out well before the center of the storm arrived, but the city avoided a direct hit. A giant oak tree next to the governor's mansion split in half, covering the yard with debris.

"If they do cut down the whole tree, that is more room for my kids to hit baseballs," DeSantis said.

Storm surge could rise as high as 16 feet (4.9 meters) in some places. Some counties implemented curfews to keep residents off roads. Diane Flowers was sound asleep at 1 a.m. Wednesday in her Wakulla County, Florida, home, but her husband was up watching the weather on TV when he got a text from their son after the storm was upgraded to a Category 4. He's a firefighter/EMT in Franklin County, which is also along the Gulf Coast.

"He said, 'You guys need to leave,'" Flowers said. "And he's not one for overreacting, so when he told us to leave, we just packed our stuff, got in our car and got going."

They quickly packed a few clothes, medicine, food for their two border collies, a computer, important documents and a bag of Cheetos. Motels were packed all the way into Alabama, where they ended up finding a room in Dothan.

The National Weather Service in Tallahassee called Idalia "an unprecedented event" since no major hurricanes on record have ever passed through the bay abutting the Big Bend. The state, still dealing with lingering damage from last year's Hurricane Ian, feared disastrous results.

Idalia grew into a Category 2 system on Tuesday and then a Category 3 storm on Wednesday before peaking as a Category 4 hurricane. It then weakened slightly. □

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Senate GOP leader Mitch McConnell appears to freeze up again

By MARY CLARE JALONICK
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell appeared to briefly freeze up and was unable to answer a question from a reporter at an event in Kentucky on Wednesday, weeks after he had a similar episode in Washington.

As seen on video from a local news station, the 81-year-old McConnell was asked whether he would run for reelection in 2026. The senator asked the reporter to repeat the question before trailing off and staring straight ahead for about 10 seconds.

An aide standing at the front of the room with McConnell then asked him whether he heard the question and repeated it to him. When McConnell did not answer, the aide announced to the room that "we're going to need a minute," and McConnell continued to stare ahead. In all, he was silent for around 30 seconds.

McConnell eventually answered two additional questions though not the one about a 2026 cam-



Robbin Taylor, State Director to U.S. Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., joins McConnell while he speaks at the NKY Chamber of Commerce at the Madison Event Center, Wednesday, Aug. 30, 2023, in Covington, Ky.

campaign and was halting and appeared to have some difficulty speaking. The woman then ended the news conference and McConnell left the room, walking slowly.

McConnell's reaction was similar to an occurrence in July, when he froze for about 20 seconds at a news conference in the Capitol. That time, he went back to his office with aides and then returned to an-

swer more questions.

The latest incident in Covington, Kentucky, on Wednesday only adds to the questions in recent months about McConnell's health and whether the Republican, who was first elected to the Senate in 1984 and has served as GOP leader since 2007, will remain in Congress and in his leadership post.

McConnell called South Dakota Sen. John Thune,

the No. 2 Senate Republican who is seen as one of his potential successors, after the event Wednesday. McConnell "sounded like his usual self and was in good spirits," Thune spokesman Ryan Wrasse said.

Wednesday's freeze-up came after McConnell had given a 20-minute speech earlier at the event. He appeared more comfortable during that part of the program, discussing the

upcoming Senate schedule and joking at one point that his job is like "a groundskeeper at the cemetery. Everybody is under you but nobody is listening."

His office said afterward that McConnell was feeling "momentarily lightheaded" and would see a physician before his next event. Similarly, after the July episode, aides said McConnell was lightheaded and McConnell told reporters several hours later that he was "fine." Neither McConnell or his aides have given any further details about what happened.

In March, McConnell suffered a concussion and a broken rib after falling and hitting his head after a dinner event at a hotel. He did not return to the Senate for almost six weeks. Since then, he has appeared to walk more slowly and his speech has often sounded more halting.

Asked about McConnell at a press event shortly afterward, President Joe Biden said he had just heard what had happened. "Mitch is a friend, as you know," Biden said. "Not a joke. ... He's a good friend. □"

Associated Press

U.S. OKs military aid to Taiwan under program usually reserved for sovereign nations

By MATTHEW LEE
AP Diplomatic Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Biden administration has approved the first-ever U.S. military transfer to Taiwan under a program gener-

ally reserved for assistance to sovereign, independent states.

The State Department notified Congress of the sale on Wednesday. It said the material would "be used

to strengthen Taiwan's self-defense capabilities through joint and combined defense capability and enhanced maritime domain awareness and maritime security capability."

The package is modest only \$80 million of what Congress had set aside as a potential \$2 billion but the implications of using the so-called Foreign Military Financing program to provide it will likely infuriate China. Beijing, which regards Taiwan as a renegade province, has repeatedly not ruled out the use of force to reunite it with the mainland and vociferously protests all U.S. arms sales to the self-governing island.

However, previous arms sales to Taiwan have been approved under other authorities that do not necessarily imply statehood. U.S. officials were quick to say that the provision of FMF funding to Taiwan did not represent a change in policy. It's a position the Chinese are sure to disagree with. The only other time the U.S. has provided a non-nation-state with military assistance under FMF was to the African Union, an organization of sovereign states based in Ethiopia, according to American officials.

The notification, a copy of which was obtained by The Associated Press, did not specify what military equipment or systems would be

paid for under FMF, which commits U.S. taxpayer dollars to pay for the supply of materiel to foreign countries.

But, it said items that could be covered would include: air and coastal defense systems, armored vehicles, infantry fighting vehicles, drones, ballistic missile and cyber defenses, and advanced communications equipment. It added that protective gear, an array of small, medium and heavy weapons systems, ammunition, armored and infantry fighting vehicles could also be included.

In addition to equipment, FMF may also be used to support training for Taiwanese military forces. □



In this grab from video released by the Taiwan Military News Agency, a pilot checks on a F-16s at Hualien Airbase in Taiwan's southeastern Hualien county, Sunday, Aug. 20, 2023.

Associated Press

California prison on generator power after wildfires knock out electricity and fill cells with smoke

By **CHRISTOPHER WEBER**
Associated Press

A Northern California prison was on generator power for a second week and inmates were issued masks to cope with unhealthy air after wildfires knocked out electricity and choked the remote region with smoke. Dozens of lightning-sparked blazes have burned for weeks near Oregon, where the largest group, the Smith River Complex, has charred more than 115 square miles (298 square kilometers) of forest.

Last week flames came within about 5 miles (8 kilometers) of Pelican Bay State Prison, but firefighters protected communities around the maximum-security lockup that houses about 1,600 inmates in Del Norte County, said Dev Khalsa, a spokesperson at the fire's command center. "Unfortunately the smoke cover has been pretty thick," Khalsa said. Air quality was unhealthy in the coastal area Wednesday, according to the U.S. Air Quality Index.

Lingering smoke infiltrated Pelican Bay housing, where Terri Thompson Jackson's husband, Jeffrey Jackson, is incarcerated. She became concerned when he coughed throughout a recent phone call.



In this photo provided by Caltrans, smoke and flames rise from the Smith River Complex Fire next to the closed U.S. Route 199 in Gasquet, Calif., on Aug. 16, 2023.

Associated Press

"I said, 'Do you need to get a COVID test?' He said, 'No it's these wildfires. It's terrible,'" Thompson Jackson said. Jackson told her the power had gone out and many inmates were confined to smoky cells with very little ventilation.

In a Facebook group for loved ones of Pelican Bay inmates, "everyone was wondering, is it safe? Are they going to have to evacuate?" Thompson Jackson said.

The prison was never in

immediate danger from flames, the state Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation said. Power cannot be restored until the fire has been fully contained, the agency said.

Generator power was expanded last Friday and this week hot meal service resumed, "the population can shower normally, and items like barbershop tools and tablets can now be recharged," agency spokesperson Tessa Outhyse said in an email.

Fans, air purifiers and masks were also brought in, she said. The agency is working with health departments and prison medical staff, Outhyse said, and has contracted vendors that can respond statewide with supplies for emergencies. During emergencies like wildfires, corrections officials are in regular contact with law enforcement, fire departments and the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services, the corrections department

said. Institutions with vulnerable populations like prisons, state hospitals and veterans homes follow their own safety and evacuation plans with help from the state, said emergency services spokesperson Brian Ferguson.

The corrections department said its plan follows the National Incident Management System, which provides all federal, state, and local response agencies with a "consistent set of principles, management structures, and a systematic approach to emergency response."

A Sacramento County jail was evacuated during floods earlier this year. In 2021, the enormous Dixie Fire came very close to the California Correctional Center and High Desert State Prison in Susanville, California, but no evacuation was needed, Ferguson said. "The logistics involved in transporting those people in a safe way is really hard to fathom," said Chesa Boudin, Executive Director of the Criminal Law & Justice Center at the University of California, Berkeley, School of Law. A quarter of Pelican Bay's inmates are in a unit commonly known as solitary confinement, which would add to the challenge. □

Children getting wrongly dropped from Medicaid because of automation 'glitch'



The Department of Health and Human Services building is shown on April 5, 2009, in Washington.

Associated Press

By **DAVID A. LIEB**
Associated Press
JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (AP)

— Children in many states are being wrongly cut off from Medicaid because of a "glitch" in the automated systems being used in a massive eligibility review for the government-run health care program, a top Medicaid official said Wednesday.

The federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services is asking all states to review their computer-automated processes to

make sure that children are evaluated separately from their parents and aren't losing coverage merely because of their parents' ineligibility or inaction. Though federal officials remained vague about the scope of the problem, it likely involves at least half the states and potentially affects millions of children, said Joan Alker, executive director of Georgetown University Center for Children and Families. "I think it's a very significant problem," said Alker,

whose center is tracking the Medicaid renewal process in each state.

In most states, children can qualify for Medicaid at household incomes that are several times higher than allowed for adults. Yet in many states, "eligible kids are not being successfully renewed, and that is a violation of federal requirements," said Daniel Tsai, director of the CMS Center for Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program Services. □

Hungary's Orbán urges U.S. to 'call back Trump' to end Ukraine war

By BELA SZANDELSZKY

Associated Press

BUDAPEST, Hungary (AP)

— Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán said in a sprawling interview with former Fox News host Tucker Carlson that the only path to ending the war in Ukraine would be the re-election of Donald Trump to the U.S. presidency.

In the interview, posted Wednesday on Carlson's page on X, formerly known as Twitter, the nationalist Orbán praised Trump's foreign policy while blasting President Joe Biden's administration and its approach to the war.

Although Trump faces criminal charges for allegedly trying to overturn the 2020 election, returning the former president to office would be "the only way out" of the conflict, Orbán argued, calling any suggestion that Ukraine could defeat Russia "a lie."

"The Russians are far stronger, far more numerous than the Ukrainians," Hungary's prime minister said. "Call back Trump. ... Trump is the man who can save the Western world."

Orbán's view of the state of the war conflicts with how U.S. and Ukrainian officials



Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán speaks during a yearly State of the Nation address in Budapest, Hungary, on Feb. 18, 2023.

Associated Press

have characterized the invaded country's prospects for taking back Russian-occupied territory.

Speaking to reporters last week, White House national security adviser Jake Sullivan said the administration does "not assess that the conflict is a stalemate." "We continue to support Ukraine in its effort to take territory as part of this counteroffensive, and we are seeing it continue to take territory on a methodical, systematic basis," Sullivan

said. Carlson's 30-minute video interview, filmed Aug. 21 on the opulent terrace of Orbán's office overlooking Budapest, was his second in two years with the right-wing leader. When Carlson was a Fox News host, his program broadcast from Hungary's capital for a week in 2021. At the time, he praised Orbán's self-styled "illiberal democracy" a system that eschews traditional liberal values in favor of conservative Christian rule as a

model for the United States to follow.

Orbán, in office since 2010, has long been criticized for overseeing an increasingly autocratic political system. The European Union, as well as the U.S. State Department and numerous international observers, have alleged that Orbán has rolled back minority rights, seized control of the judiciary and media, and manipulated the election system to ensure his hold on power. □

Bee alert: 5 million bees fall off truck near Toronto

TORONTO (AP) — Police west of Toronto on Wednesday warned drivers to keep their car windows closed after a truck spilled crates carrying five million bees onto a road.

Halton Regional Police said they received a call around 6:15 a.m. reporting the bee crates had come loose from a truck and spilled onto Guelph Line, north of Dundas Street, in Burlington, Ontario, just west of Toronto.

It was "quite the scene," Const. Ryan Anderson said. "Crates were literally on the road and swarms of bees were flying around," he said.

"The initial beekeeper that was on scene was appar-

ently stung a few times." The scene prompted police to warn drivers to close their

windows as they passed by and for pedestrians to avoid the area.



Beekeeper Mike Osborne uses his hand to look for the queen bee as he removes bees from a car after a truck carrying bee hives swerved on Guelph Line road causing the hives to fall and release bees in Burlington, Ontario, on Wednesday, Aug. 30, 2023.

Associated Press

About an hour after police put out a notice on social media, several beekeepers were in touch with police offering to help. Six or seven beekeepers eventually arrived at the scene, Anderson said.

By around 9:15 a.m., police said most of the five million bees had been safely collected and the crates were being hauled away. Some crates had been left behind for the uncollected bees to return to them on their own.

A colony of honeybees in summer has around 50,000 to 80,000 bees, according to the Canadian Honey Council, a national association of beekeepers. □

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Palestinians clash with own security forces in a West Bank refugee camp, leaving 1 dead

By ISABEL DEBRE
Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Fighting erupted in a refugee camp in the northern occupied West Bank on Wednesday between Palestinians and their own security forces, leaving a 25-year-old Palestinian dead, officials said. The unrest underscored the challenges facing Palestinian police trying to impose order in the restive territory. In east Jerusalem, Israeli police said a Palestinian assailant stabbed an Israeli man near a light-rail station before the attacker was shot and killed by police. Israeli paramedics said the Israeli man was moderately wounded, and pronounced the attacker dead.

Elsewhere in the West Bank, Israeli security forces shot a Palestinian man who they said tried to ram his car into soldiers at a military checkpoint, hitting and lightly wounding a soldier, authorities said.

Wednesday's incidents were the latest in one of the area's most violent phases in years. Palestinian police entered the refugee camp in Tulkarem after residents appealed to the Palestinian Authority to remove



Israeli soldiers speak to a Palestinian woman near the site of an alleged car-ramming attack near Beit Hagai, a Jewish settlement in the hills south of the large Palestinian city of Hebron, Wednesday, Aug. 30, 2023.

Associated Press

metal street barriers set up by local militants that were blocking access to homes and schools, Palestinian security spokesperson Talal Dweikat said.

The angled metal barricades are a staple in the militarized refugee camps of the northern West Bank, meant to deter Israeli military vehicles during the frequent army raids.

After police cleared the

streets, Dweikat said Palestinian militants opened fire in front of the Tulkarem Muqata, the authority headquarters. Police responded "to control the security situation," he added. A Palestinian security officer in Tulkarem, speaking on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to talk to the media, said that an uninvolved Palestinian resident

who he identified as the 25-year-old was caught in the crossfire and killed.

He claimed the Palestinian security forces had fired tear gas and stun grenades at Palestinian Islamic Jihad militants but not live fire. Palestinians, he said, were seeking to conduct an autopsy to determine the cause of death but the local militant group refused and was keeping his body.

The Hamas militant group condemned the death. Palestinian security forces said they are investigating. In flashpoint point cities in the northern West Bank under the administration of the Palestinian Authority, attempts by Palestinian security forces to reassert internal control have stirred anger among defiant militants, who deride the unpopular authority and its leader, President Mahmoud Abbas, as collaborators with Israel. The PA administers semi-autonomous areas in the Israeli-occupied territory.

Unable to protect Palestinians against surging attacks by Jewish settlers and often deadly Israeli military raids into Palestinian towns and cities, Palestinian security forces have faced deep public criticism over their perceived impotence and reviled security alliance with Israel that dates back to the Oslo peace accords three decades ago.

Even as the fighting in Tulkarem camp petered out, the situation remained tense. The head of police in nearby Jenin, Brig. Gen. Azzam Jebara, said the authority was sending police reinforcements to Tulkarem. □

Haitian judge interviews Colombian suspects for the first time since the president was assassinated

By EVENS SANON
Associated Press

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) — A judge in Haiti is for the



Unidentified Colombian suspects sit in a van in handcuffs as they arrive to appear before the investigating judge appointed to the case of the assassination of Haitian President Jovenel Moise in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Tuesday, Aug. 29, 2023.

Associated Press

first time interrogating some of the 18 Colombian suspects arrested more than two years ago and accused of being part of a mercenary squad that assassinated President Jovenel Moise, a judicial official said Wednesday.

The former Colombian soldiers earlier had refused to talk when questioned by a judge who previously had been assigned to the case, magistrate Bernard Saint-Vil, who appoints judges in the case, told The Associated Press.

The first two suspects were transported on Monday and Tuesday from Haiti's main penitentiary in down-

town Port-au-Prince to a government office in nearby Petion-Ville where they were undergoing interrogations by Judge Walther Wesser Voltaire, the magistrate said.

The 18 Colombians are among more than 40 suspects including elite Haitian police officers who were arrested in Haiti after Moise was fatally shot in July 2021 in his private residence. The investigation in Haiti has moved very slowly, in part due to a high turnover of judges overseeing the case and because gang violence has disrupted court proceedings in the capital and beyond.

On Wednesday, the U.S. embassy in Haiti urged all U.S. citizens to leave the Caribbean country as soon as possible, "given the current security situation and infrastructure challenges." Voltaire is the fifth judge to oversee the investigation, with previous judges stepping down for various reasons. One judge said his family pressured him not to take the case because they feared he would be killed.

Meanwhile, authorities in the U.S. have filed charges against 11 suspects extradited over the past couple of years. □



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Papiamento words and phrases you may want to know!

(Oranjestad)—Aruba is a potting melt of different nationalities, cultures and languages. Primarily for this reason, the average Aruban can understand and speak Dutch, English and Spanish relatively well. However, as much as we pride ourselves in being able to communicate with almost everyone, we cherish our native tongue Papiamento above all else. Want to learn some common words in our language? Here are a few basic words and phrases that can get you a hat tip from an Aruban.

When you arrive at the airport in Aruba, one of the first words in Papiamento you may encounter is "Bon bini." Bon bini in Papiamento means welcome, and is probably the most famous Papiamento word for tourists.

Hi! Bye!

To be fair, there is no unique way to say "hello" in Papiamento. At least, not officially. We often just use the English "hello" or "hey", or Dutch "hallo" to greet someone. We do however, always follow it up with "con bay?" or "con ta?" Con bay is a shortened version of "con ta bay?", which essentially means "how are you?"

The word "con" in Papiamento



means "how?" and is pronounced with a rounder "o" sounds, like in the English word "cone". "Ta bay" refers to how you are doing.

When we say goodbye, we use the word "ayo" (not like the Ayo Rock Formation, but also...kinda?). We may also use "te oro", which means "see you later".

Greetings during the day

Most, if not all, languages have different ways to greet according to the time of day, and Papiamento is no different. Since Papiamento is heavily influenced from Portuguese and Spanish, some of these phras-

es may look very familiar.

1. Bon dia is used in the morning, up to about noon. Bon dia essentially means good morning. The word "bon" means "good", and while "dia" does not directly mean "morning" in English, it is used often to refer to the morning time.
2. Bon tardi. In the afternoon to early evening hours, we use "bon tardi" to greet people, which means "good afternoon". "Tardi" actually comes from the word "atardi", which directly translates to "afternoon". However, the short-

ened "tardi" is used to keep the rhythm on the phrase. And the same could be said for our last greeting of the day.

3. Bon nochi. You guessed it, "bon nochi" means "good night". Just like "tardi", "nochi" is actually the shortened version of the word "anochi".

Yes...no...maybe?

The affirmative and negative expression is very simple in Papiamento. Just like Spanish, our yeses are "si" and our no's are "no". Pretty easy right? If you want to gain some extra points from younger locals, you can also say "se", which is a more casual affirmative used mostly by the younger generation. However, do note: some older generations may find this improper and not respectful, so keep that in mind.

Thanks man...

Lastly, a word that we can also say more often is "danki", which means literally "thank you". "Danki" is derived from the Dutch word "bedankt". Though we don't really have a translation for "I appreciate it" in English, we do use "masha danki" to convey the message. "Masha" means "a lot" or "very", so "masha danki" means "thank you very much". □

Prohibited by law: leaving the island with seashells, white sand or corals

(Oranjestad)—Often times, the customs department at the airport intercepts many tourists leaving the island with seashells, white sand and/or corals as souvenirs.

Conforming to the international treaty of CITES and our local law which protects our Flora & Fauna, it is absolutely prohibited to take any seashell, sand and coral outside

of Aruba. This is to protect our environment. The high number of seashells, coral and amount of sand confiscated is very strange and it is suspected that our own locals are the ones selling these to the tourists, which is unacceptable.

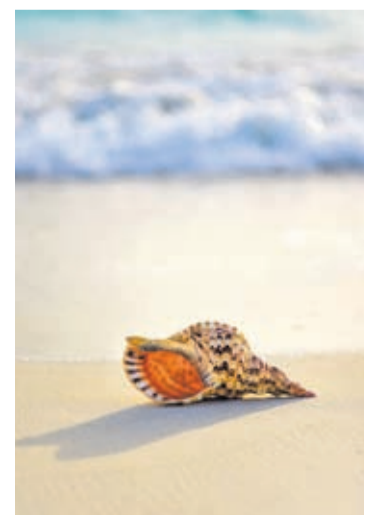
Upon confiscation at the airport, you can also face a fine that they have to pay

before leaving. This is surely not a pleasant experience for the tourist. This also leads to a negative reaction which can put our tourism in a negative light.

Though we love to accommodate our visitors, let's all give nature the respect it deserves by protecting our environment. Stop collecting seashells, white sand and cor-

als from our shores and stop buying or accepting these from local sellers or companies.

We want our future generations and visitors to enjoy the beauty of our beaches, shells and corals in a sustainable way, without destroying or disrupting the Aruban ecosystem. Help us protect what is ours!



Paseo Herencia is always fun and exciting to visit



NOORD— Paseo Herencia offers a variety of shopping, dining and entertainment options in an outdoor center located in the heart of Palm Beach – walking distance from the high-rise hotels.

Shopping

The Paseo Herencia stores offer a great collection in beach wear, clothing, perfume, shoes, jewelry, souvenirs and much more. Pamper yourself by visiting Maggy's and enjoy their salon services and shop for your favorite beauty products. Aruba Aloe has that perfect gift to bring back home, all made with natural ingredients. Other brand favorites are Tommy Hilfiger, Calvin Klein, Aldo, Carmen Steffens, Nike store, Pandora and many more.

Restaurants

Start with a breakfast meal at Paseo Herencia offering unique breakfast options such as Drunk's Denial with their Make it Your Own Crêpe Bar offering sweet and savory crêpe flavors and the option to booze it up with their Mimosa crêpe (mandarin soaked in champagne), Pina Colada (pineapples in coconut rum), Bourbon Apple, Brandy Apricot, Whiskey Pear and more. Location can be found by following the bakery smell upon arrival. Another option is Seabarita offering you delicious breakfast options ranging from Huevos Rancheros to empanadas surrounded by a cozy picnic setting with streetside view. Go Argentinian style at Che Bar and try their delicious omelet with chorizo/ham, mozzarella, onions, peppers, and tomatoes served with skillet potatoes and toast. Looking for something for the whole family? Visit TGI Fridays and choose between waffle, omelets, breakfast sandwiches and tacos starting at \$8. These restaurants are also open



for lunch & dinner offering you a variety of cuisine choices. If you're looking for more unique concepts, join us for dinner at Xixon Restaurant greatly known in Miami for their Spanish inspired dishes with top notch flavors and the largest wine variety or visit The Lazy Turtle and try their exotic African dish "Kuvuta Kuku" accompanied by their tasty lazy cocktails. Coming for drinks? Sip and have a good time at the Bulldog Aruba located in the center of the Plaza. Open till late.

VIP Cinema

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Entertainment

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Exploring the Mainstreet of San Nicolas

SAN NICOLAS— At Just 11 miles southeast from Oranjestad you will enter the city San Nicolas, also known as Sunrise City or Chocolate City. A city that is rich in authentic culture and island charm. San Nicolas is Aruba's second largest city and was once a bustling company town dominated by the oil industry since the early 1930's.

Over the course of four decades, its demographics had changed immensely due to a stream of Afro-Caribbean and South American workers who came to fill the jobs in the oil refinery between the 1920's until the 1960's. To this day traces of the multicultural influences in culinary offerings and customs, housing and population are clearly visible in San Nicolas - more than anywhere else on the island.

Flow of history

if you are looking for history San Nicolas has it. Here you will find three amazing museums, The Museum of



Industry, the Community Museum and the Carnival Euphoria, all within walking distance from one another. The Museum of Industry is situated in the Water Tower in San Nicolas and narrates Aruba's industrial history which began in the 19th century. Here you will learn about gold, aloe, phosphate, oil and the tourism industries which made San Nicolas once a bustling

business center. Experience the touching stories of those who were part of this history.

Nicolaas Store built in 1940 and renovated in 2014 is the home of the Community Museum. The collection is remarkable and spans millennia. Ancient fossils stand next to tableaus of an authentically recreated colonial kitchen and bedroom and 19th-century barber-shop, just to name a few of the items of old-time Aruba that has been preserved. A collection of artifacts and other objects of artistic, cultural, historical, or scientific importance can be found here for the purpose of education or enjoyment.

Carnival Euphoria is showcasing Aruba's Carnival. See how Carnival has developed over the past 65 years.

The new San Nicolas

In the shadow of the refinery, an art capital is quietly beginning to grow. This is the new San Nicolas, a place that is starting to become a magnet for all that



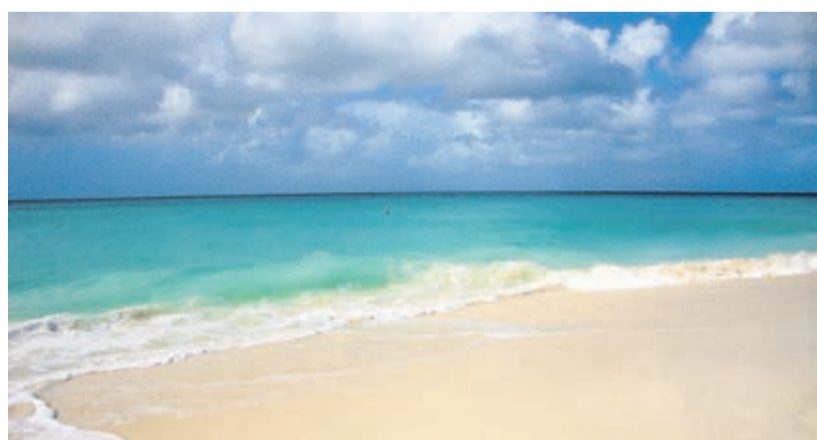
is young, cool and hip in Aruba. Indeed, San Nicolas has all of the ingredients of an emerging cultural hub — varied history, interesting architecture, and, perhaps most importantly, an urban layout that makes it walkable. As you walk around, the streets are silent but the walls are loud, filled with bright, colorful murals painted by a collection of artists from around the world. Thanks to the efforts of various art organizations in Aruba, such as Art Rules Aruba and Aruba Art Fair, San Nicolas has had quite the aesthetic makeover with regards to vibrant street art. Each year more and more stunning murals are replacing broken down buildings with colorful art

pieces that keep brightening up SunriseCity.

Must See, Do, Buy & Eat

A little bit of everything can be found in the main street. Stores selling shoes, clothing, jewelry you name it. Arts & crafts by Cosecha store & Creative Center, a design store in which you can immerse yourself in discovering genuine and locally made arts and crafts which reflect the diversification of the Aruban craft heritage and the artistic supply of artisans. Don't miss out on trying the exquisite food offered by the cafes and restaurants or just enjoy a peaceful walk admiring the murals, mosaic benches and all the history San Nicolas has to offer. □

Aruba to me



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EpisodeXLIV Small Aruban Industries of the 19th century

Small industries tried in Aruba such as the tobacco, cotton and wool industry did not achieve an appreciable success.

However peanut-growing, imported from Curacao from Aruba by the Dutch West India Company grew into an important industry. In the nineteenth century the main harvest always took place at an earlier date than on Curacao. The difference in soil and the knowledge of the natives made Aruba for a long time the peanut island. At Noord and near Cero Cristal and Hooiberg in particular peanut-growing was a favored means of existence.

For the growing of cotton, even with the support of the government, which offered the head of every family the lease for an indefinite period of 2 1/2 acres of soil, to be extended to ten acres on request, was of no avail.

In 1866 the administration made an attempt at stimulating the growing of cashew trees in connection with the rise in gum-prices, but this endeavor, too, proved unsuccessful.

Throughout the nineteenth century maize growing developed in proportion as the population increased and according as rains favored the success of the crops. This in a manner became traditional, work went on two plots: a piece of rich clay soil and a meagre sand-plot. If because of an abundance of rain the crop from the rich soil was disappointing, this loss was made good by the crop from the sandy plot, and inversely.

Different grades of maize from abroad, such as Jerusalem Corn, Yellow Millow Corn, etc., have been tried here. In the long run a type of corn, originally from China, known as sorghum substituted the native Aruban maize. This was called mai-shi rabo or maishi di siete, produced best results. It is called seven weeks' maize because when the water is favorable it can be harvested within seven weeks



of having been planted.

The priests acted as distributors of the seeded plants. In 1911, when Aruba did not yet know of imported canned food, many worries of the Arubans about their maize crops. In most cases the crops are exposed to many dangers which cause them to partly or completely miscarry. When the seed needs a long time to develop owing to lack of rain, it dies underground, or is devoured by earth-worms or ants.

When the plant has risen to a certain height, maybe one or two feet, there is a possibility that, owing to a prolonged drought or too much humidity, a liquid is formed inside the plant, a sort of oil turning from bright yellow into black and becoming as thick as molasses. This pest named maba, greatly injures the plant, hampering or paralyzing its vegetative force. As this liquid arises from a long drought or too much

humidity it is washed off the plant by heavy rains or dried out by the fierce sun or hard wind.

Cultivation methods were more advanced on Aruba than at other places. Maize-harvests very rarely completely failed, and more often than not two harvests could be gathered in.

Besides maize, beans were also grown in the agricultural season. There are numbers of different native kinds, as for instance: Janchikok, Jaes prinses, karanxu, bonofees, marins,

yenye, wowo-preto, bonchi corra, wandu, bochi shinishi, etc. It is odd that on neither of the other islands, Curacao or Bonaire, is bean-growing so productive and varied as on Aruba and mainly attributed to the Native American heritage and traditions.

Maize and bean crops served for nourishment, the peanut-crops to buy clothes, shoes, and other necessities, and to pay off debts.

The work did not proceed without plan, it was given serious thought beforehand how the cunucu could best be divided into lots suitable for planting the various species. Everything was duly weighed: this soil is good for maize, the low lot carries off the water well and should be planted with pindas, the corner there is for beans, etc.

However, no too optimistic view should be taken of Aruban agricultures. In 1827 commander Simon Plats reported "the condition of the holdings planted by the residents is still the same as twenty five years ago." Real plantations, with the exception of Fontein, did not exist.

To get to know more over Aruba's and its origins, its animals and culture, we highly recommend you to book your visit for our renowned cultural encounter session has been entertaining curious participants for decades. Mail us at etnianaativa03@gmail.com to confirm your participation. Our facilities and activities take place close to high rise hotels. □



Did you know about...

Basic driving rules on Aruba (part 2)



(Oranjestad)—In Yesterday's issue, we've provided some basic rules when driving on the four-lane highways and roundabouts on the island. Today, we want to offer you more tips and tricks when it comes to driving on the roads and highways of Aruba.

Speed limit in certain areas

As mentioned in yesterday's issue, the legal minimum and maximum speed limit on the island is 50 and 80 km/h respectively. However, there are some areas where it is mandated to drive up to a certain speed. This is always indicated by a circular traffic sign with red border and the number 50 on it. Signs like these are always paired by a similar sign with the number crossed out further down the road. This means that the mandate for this speed is now over; you may increase your velocity. Red borders on traffic sign—whether it's a circle or triangle—usually signal a warning, prohibition or preference.

Besides the "50" sign, you may also encounter a traffic sign that says "bebouwde kom". These can be found in San Nicolas and Oranjestad. Bebouwde kom signs are rectangular and blue, and essentially tell you that you are in a heavily inhabited area. The maximum speed limit in a bebouwde kom is 50 km/h. Just like the previous pair,

bebouwde kom signs are also paired with a similar sign crossed out.

Priority signs

On the main roads of Aruba (not the highways), you may see a yellow, squared sign with a white border. This sign tells you that on this road, you have priority and all other traffic should yield to you. This sign can be seen in Savaneta for example. So, if you are driving on the main road in Savaneta going to San Nicolas, you are driving on a single long road, and other cars that want to get on this main road or cross it, either from an intersection or from a dirt road, must all wait until traffic on the main road is clear. In other words, you do not have to stop for them. This sign too has a counter part that indicates that your priority is over.

Another priority sign you may encounter is a triangle sign with a red border and something that looks like a cross. You'll see this sign in an intersection. The general rule of thumb for crossing an intersection that do not contain traffic lights, roundabouts, sign or arrows on the road, is to always yield for traffic on your right. However, if you encounter this sign on your side of the intersection, you have priority over the other cars, even the one on your right.

However, be careful not to confuse this sign with a simi-



lar up-side down triangle, also found on intersections. This sign is a prohibition sign, telling you that you have to stop and give other cars priority. Of course you also have a "stop" sign that mean the same thing. The stop sign is generally used for tricky intersections with minimal view of opposite incoming traffic.

These are some of the basic rules that you would have to know if you decide to drive on the island. These are of course other traffic signs, and we recommend you visit aruba-travelguide.com

for an extensive overview of all traffic signs used on Aruba. □

Picture credits: aruba-travel-guide.com

CROSSWORD

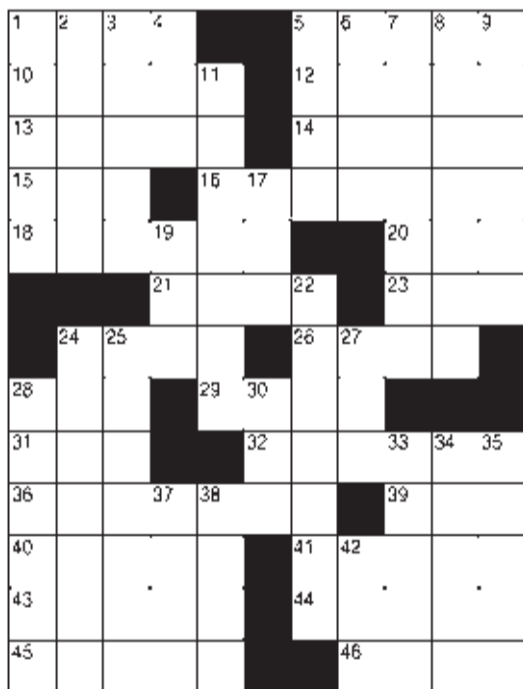
By THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 1 Wilson of "Midnight in Paris"
 - 5 44th president
 - 10 Peeling gadget
 - 12 Deserve
 - 13 Ooze forth
 - 14 Prelude
 - 15 Workout unit
 - 16 Sewing aid
 - 18 Toward the wake
 - 20 "The Simpsons" bartender
 - 21 A bunch
 - 23 Auditor's org.
 - 24 String tie
 - 26 Fail to fail
 - 28 Scathing review
 - 29 Ump's call
 - 31 Imitating
 - 32 Hospital worker
 - 36 Old North Church sight
 - 39 Spike of film
 - 40 Supply with funding
 - 41 Writer Jong
 - 43 Point count
- DOWN**
- 1 Verdi field
 - 2 Becomes fuller
 - 3 Blow one's top
 - 4 Composer Rorem
 - 5 Leave off
 - 6 Crooked
 - 7 Greek goddess of hunting
 - 8 Parallels
 - 9 Makes amends
 - 11 Criticism
 - 44 Barber's tool
 - 45 Campout sights
 - 46 Works leather

M	E	D	A	L	S	I	D	E	S
A	V	E	N	U	E	G	I	L	L
D	E	N	I	A	L	U	G	L	Y
S	U	L	T	A	N				
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S	E	I	N	E		U	S	E	S
	F	A	S	T	E	N			
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H	E	E	L		S	P	U	R	O
E	A	S	Y		T	O	T	E	M

Yesterday's answer

- | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------|
| 17 Busy worker | 30 Vacuum's lack |
| 19 Angled pipe | 33 "My Fair Lady" lady |
| 22 Alternative to dice | 34 Scout's work |
| 24 Tightrope walker's need | 35 Ap- proaches |
| 25 Con- tinually | 37 Civil wrong |
| 27 Gallery fill | 38 Some sheep |
| 28 Least bright | 42 Mob pariah |



8-31

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's. X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

8-31

CRYPTOQUOTE

V ZLFOB DF SAQOAB R ZRQBBQ
VY SLXOVZO CBZRAOB DLBQB
DLB DQADL VOY'D OF
BROVEX CBYD. — RYJBER
TBQMBE

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: IT IS THE UNKNOWN AROUND THE CORNER THAT TURNS MY WHEELS — HEINZ STUCKE

How to avoid the No. 1 text message scam putting your money at risk

By RUTH SARREAL of Nerd-Wallet

The Federal Trade Commission recently revealed the most reported text message scam: bank impersonations.

Reports of bank impersonations by text in 2022 jumped to 20 times the number reported in 2019. According to the FTC, consumers reported a loss of more than \$330 million to text message scams in 2022. And cash that's lost because of bank fraud or scams isn't covered by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. or National Credit Union Administration.

Banks are a safe place to keep your money, but there are still a few basic but important precautions you can take to ensure you don't fall for a bank-impersonation text scam. Here's how to protect your money from text message scams impersonating your financial institution.



In this Sept. 16, 2017, file photo, a person uses a smart phone in Chicago.

Associated Press

DON'T MAKE MONEY MOVES UNDER PRESSURE

Text message scammers will try to make you feel like action is required immediately at the risk of losing your money.

It may come as an urgent message warning you to call or click on a link because of alleged suspicious activity.

"Any type of pressure tactic is not legitimate that is not your bank," says Paul Benda, senior vice president of operational risk and cybersecurity at the American Bankers Association. As with any decision about your finances, avoid taking actions when you feel scared, stressed out or pressured. □

For travelers who want to avoid babies and kids, one airline will test an adults-only section



Senior cabin crew member Magdalini Michailidou stands on the gangway prior the first holiday flight of the Corendon Airlines Europe to the Greek destination Rhodes at the airport Erfurt-Weimar in Erfurt, Germany, July 2, 2020.

Associated Press

By DAVID KOENIG
AP Airlines Writer

DALLAS (AP) — One airline plans to find out if solitude-seeking travelers will pay a hefty extra charge to avoid sitting near babies and little kids.

Corendon Airlines says that it will sell an adults-only zone no one under 16 on flights between Amsterdam and Curacao starting in November. □

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A supermoon passes behind the illuminated windows of a New York City skyscraper, Aug. 1, 2023.

Associated Press

Supermoon could team up with Hurricane Idalia to raise tides higher

By **JEFF MARTIN**
Associated Press

A rare blue supermoon could raise tides above normal just as Hurricane Idalia lashes Florida's west coast, exacerbating flooding from the storm.

The moon was closest to the Earth on Wednesday, the same day Idalia made landfall as a high-end Category 3 hurricane near Keaton Beach in Florida's sparsely populated Big Bend region with maximum sustained winds near 125 mph (200 kph).

While a supermoon can make for a spectacular backdrop in photos of landmarks around the world, its intensified gravitational pull also makes tides higher.

"I would say the timing is pretty bad for this one," said Brian Haines, the meteorologist in charge at the National Weather Service office in Charleston, South Carolina. □

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Denzel Washington's vigilante battles the Italian mafia in 'Equalizer 3'

By **JAKE COYLE**
AP Film Writer

There's an awful lot of talk about the end of movie stars considering Denzel Washington is right over here, walking around.

Antoine Fuqua's "Equalizer 3," a taut and textured sequel to Washington's vigilante series, isn't one of the actor's best films. It wouldn't crack his top 10. But it vividly encapsulates Washington's formidable on-screen potency.

You might think this would be in the movie's brutal action sequences, but no. It's the scenes of Washington fastidiously having a cup of tea at a sidewalk cafe or strolling the streets of a Sicilian town. This is a movie stitched together less by its plot mechanics than the pleasure of watching Denzel smirk, scowl and smile, in leisurely scenes mixed in with all the murder.

In that way, the "Equalizer" movies (the third of which is certainly the best of a so-so bunch), remind me of those great Walter Matthau thrillers like "Charley Varrick" and "Hopscotch" movies about old men with expressive eyebrows who are set in their ways but have plenty of tricks left up their sleeve. (Washington,



This image released by Sony Pictures Entertainment shows Denzel Washington in a scene from "The Equalizer 3."

now 68, also took over Matthau's role in the remake of "Pelham One Two Three.") There's no shortage these days of older stars plying their special sets of skills in action thrillers. Throw a stone in a movie theater and you're likely to hit (and risk drawing the lethal ire of) Liam Neeson, Harrison Ford or Tom Cruise. "Equalizer 3," an all-in-all good entry in the genre, is on the bloodier end of the spectrum. Yet curiously neither the fight sequences (rapid and gro-

tesque) nor the film's sense of suspense (perfunctory) are much of a selling point. The film, scripted by Richard Wenk, opens with a trail of bodies through the main house of an Sicily vineyard. In the wine cellar calmly sits Robert McCall (Washington), who shrugs, "Wouldn't let me in, so..."

"The Equalizer" is loosely based on an 1980s TV series about a former intelligence service agent who spends his retirement bringing the scales of justice back in

balance for regular folks he happens to encounter. And there's a pleasantly episodic quality to the third film in the series.

A bullet in the back leaves McCall laid up in recovery after he's taken in by a kindly village doctor named Enzo (Remo Girone). We're in Southern Italy; most of the film was shot along the Amalfi coast, specifically the enchanting medieval fishing village of Atrani.

If there's one truly implausible thing about "Equalizer

3," it's the fact that there isn't a tourist in sight. McCall, who once out of bed strolls the village's cobbled steps with a cane, seems to be the only American in town. He's quickly charmed by the people who warmly welcome the "Americano."

And the same time, the Camorra mafia is pushing harder into the village, with intentions of driving out locals to make room for hotels and casinos. They make a small army of designer-dressed, tattoo-covered thugs, and they descend on the village, unaware of the lurking elite vigilante quietly sipping tea across the street from their shakedowns or eating pasta at the next table. The well-traveled Fuqua, who helmed both prior "Equalizer" movies and first directed Washington in "Training Day," is in his genre wheelhouse here. He trails McCall patiently and soaks up the local color, with a few touches of Christian imagery from the church above the town. There's a sinister, ominous sense of evil scourges a heinous drug from Syria, sold by the mafia is funding terrorists cells seeping into a society of "good people." □

Associated Press

Authors Jesmyn Ward and James McBride are among the nominees for the 10th annual Kirkus Prizes

NEW YORK (AP)—Novels by Jesmyn Ward and James McBride and story collections by Jamal Brinkley and Kelly Link are among the finalists Wednesday for the 10th annual Kirkus Prizes, for which winners in fiction, nonfiction and young reader's literature each receive \$50,000.

Kirkus judges selected six books for each of the three categories, with winners to be announced Oct. 11. The awards are presented by the trade publication Kirkus Reviews.

Ward's slave narrative "Let Us Descend" and McBride's 20th century tale "The Heaven & Earth Gro-

cery Store" were nominated in fiction, along with



This combination of images shows book cover images for "Let Us Descend" by Jesmyn Ward, left, and "The Heaven & Earth Grocery Store" by James McBride.

Associated Press

Brinkley's "Witness," Link's "White Cat, Black Dog," the acclaimed Irish novelist Paul Murray's "The Bee Sting" and New Zealander Eleanor Catton's "Biram Wood."

In nonfiction, finalists include Jennifer Homan's biography "Mr. B," Safiya Sinclair's memoir "How To Say Babylon" and Tania Brannigan's "Red Memory: The Afterlives of China's Cultural Revolution." The other nonfiction nominees are Clancy Martin's "How Not To Kill Yourself: A Portrait of the Suicidal Mind," Héctor Tobar's "Our Migrant Souls: A Meditation on Race and

the Meanings and Myths of 'Latino'" and Ilyon Woo's "Master Slave Husband Wife: An Epic Journey From Slavery to Freedom."

Young people's literature nominees include Valerie Bolling's "Together We Swim," illustrated by Kaylani Juanita; and the Brazilian author Roger Mello's "João," translated from the Portuguese by Daniel Hahn. Others cited were Kiran Millwood Hargrave's "Julia and the Shark," illustrated by Tom de Freston; Jon Klassen's "The Skull;" Ariel Aberg-Riger's "America Redux;" and Louise Finch's "The Eternal Return of Clara Hart." □

Christian McCaffrey claims the top spot in the AP's NFL running back rankings

By **JOSH DUBOW**
AP Pro Football Writer

The value of running backs in the NFL has dropped precipitously in recent years as teams more and more rely on the passing game to succeed.

That philosophical change explains why a player like Christian McCaffrey, who is equally as adept at running patterns as he is at running the ball, was voted the top running back in the league by The Associated Press.

A panel of nine AP Pro Football Writers ranked the top five players at running back, making their selections based on current status entering the 2023 season. First-place votes were worth 10 points. Second through fifth-place votes were worth 5, 3, 2 and 1 points.

McCaffrey got four first-place votes, two seconds, a third and a fourth to beat out Derrick Henry for the top spot. Henry got three



San Francisco 49ers running back Christian McCaffrey plays during the NFC Championship NFL football game on Sunday, Jan. 29, 2023, in Philadelphia.

Associated Press

first-place votes and was the only back named on all nine ballots.

Josh Jacobs got one of the remaining first-place votes and came in third, Nick

Chubb was fourth and Saquon Barkley was fifth after getting the other first-place vote. Austin Ekeler and Tony Pollard also got votes.

1. CHRISTIAN MCCAFFREY,

San Francisco 49ers: McCaffrey bounced back from two injury-plagued seasons to get back to his stellar form from 2019 when he topped 1,000

yards rushing and receiving. A midseason deal to San Francisco provided a big spark and McCaffrey's presence as a runner and receiver helped the Niners score 30.5 points per game in his 10 games as a starter. McCaffrey averaged 114.8 yards from scrimmage per game with 10 TDs in his 10 starts in San Francisco.

2. DERRICK HENRY, Tennessee Titans: Henry is perhaps the most dominant runner in the game with more than 1,500 yards on the ground in three of the past four seasons. Only four players in NFL history have more seasons with at least 1,500 yards rushing than Henry. His 109.9 yards rushing per game the last four seasons are nearly 20 yards better than the next best player.

3. JOSH JACOBS, Las Vegas Raiders: Jacobs was hampered by injuries in 2020 and '21 but showed how dangerous he can be when healthy last season. □

Justin Jefferson selected top wide receiver by panel of AP Pro Football Writers

By **ROB MAADDI**
AP Pro Football Writer

Justin Jefferson has been setting records and terrifying defenses since the Minnesota Vikings selected him in the first round of the 2020 NFL draft.

The All-Pro wide receiver already broke four franchise records, including surpassing Hall of Famers Cris Carter and Randy Moss for receptions and yards in a single season. He not only holds the NFL record for most 100-yard receiving games (24) in a player's first three seasons, but will also have the most through four seasons even if he doesn't have one such game in 2023.

Jefferson became the youngest player in NFL history to lead the league in yards and receptions last season on his way to earning the AP Offensive Player of the Year award.

It's no surprise Jefferson was voted No. 1 wide receiver in the NFL by The Associated Press.

A panel of nine AP Pro Football Writers ranked the top five players at wide receiver, making their selections based on current sta-

tus entering the 2023 season. First-place votes were worth 10 points. Second through fifth-place votes were worth 5, 3, 2 and 1 points.

Jefferson received seven first-place votes. Davante Adams and Cooper Kupp

also received first-place votes. Jefferson and Tyreek Hill were the only wideouts named on each ballot.

Ja'Marr Chase, Stefon Diggs, De'Andre Hopkins and CeeDee Lamb also received votes.

1. JUSTIN JEFFERSON, Minnesota Vikings: Hard to believe four wide receivers were drafted ahead of Jefferson. Henry Ruggs III went No. 12 to the Raiders. Jerry Jeudy went at 15 to Denver.

Lamb was the 17th pick by Dallas. The Eagles took Jalen Reagor one pick before Jefferson at No. 21, leading to a celebration in Minnesota's draft room. The Vikings knew what they were getting. Jefferson has exceeded high expectations.

2. DAVANTE ADAMS, Las Vegas Raiders: Adams didn't miss a step after leaving Aaron Rodgers

and Green Bay and going to Las Vegas. He recorded his fourth 100-catch season, had 1,516 yards and 14 TDs while earning All-Pro honors. Adams easily outdistanced Hill for second place.

3. TYREEK HILL, Miami Dolphins: There was no let-down for Hill after leaving Patrick Mahomes and Kansas City. The four-time All-Pro had career highs in receptions (119) and yards (1,710) in his first season in Miami.

4. COOPER KUPP, Los Angeles Rams: Kupp, the 2021 Super Bowl MVP, had 75 catches for 812 yards in just nine games last year before an injury ended his season. He was halfway to matching his impressive totals from 2021 when he had 145 receptions for 1,947 yards and six TDs while earning AP Offensive Player of the Year honors. □



Minnesota Vikings wide receiver Justin Jefferson (18) catches a 17-yard touchdown pass ahead of New York Giants cornerback Jason Pinnock (27) during the second half of an NFL football game Dec. 24, 2022, in Minneapolis.

Associated Press

Head-and-neck restraints and soft walls top list of NASCAR's biggest safety improvements

By **MARK LONG**

AP Sports Writer

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. (AP)

— Chris Buescher caught a glimpse of a mangled car in the infield grass at Daytona International Speedway. He didn't think much about it at first. Then, as he circled the track under caution, he saw a slow-motion replay of the crash on a giant video board.

It was close friend Ryan Preece's No. 41 Ford. Buescher refused to watch anymore. "It's a dangerous sport. We know that getting in," Buescher said. "Sometimes you push it a little too far to the back of our minds."

Preece provided everyone a stark reminder when his car lifted off the ground



Ryan Preece barrel rolls along the back stretch during the NASCAR Cup Series auto race at Daytona International Speedway, Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023, in Daytona Beach, Fla.

Associated Press

and flipped uncontrollably in the waning laps of the NASCAR Cup Series regular-season finale at Daytona on Saturday night. Gasps, groans, tears and

eventually sighs of relief and applause followed.

Preece was able to climb out his window with help before being taken to a hospital for overnight observation. He was released the next morning and cleared to fly home to North Carolina. He will be back behind the wheel soon, another testament to the countless safety improvements that have become mainstays in NASCAR.

As part of the celebration of NASCAR's 75th season, The Associated Press interviewed 12 veteran contributors to the industry on topics ranging from the most memorable race to key challenges ahead. Eight of the 12 contributors said HANS devices were the top safety enhancement.

"The first thing that comes to my mind is the HANS device," said Edsel Ford II, great-grandson of Henry Ford and a longtime executive of the family's motor company. "It sparked a revolution in safety and eventually led to NASCAR mandating that all drivers had to wear one. Today, we see it as just another piece of equipment, but quite frankly I believe it's one of the most important."

Added Eddie Wood, co-owner and president at Wood Brothers Racing: "There was a time before they became mandatory that Ford would buy any Ford driver a HANS device if you would wear it. That's how important they knew it was."

NASCAR's darkest day came in 2001, when seven-time champion Dale Earnhardt was killed in the final turn of the season-opening Daytona 500. Earnhardt was the fourth national series driver killed in nine months.

NASCAR never stopped after the deaths of Adam Petty, Kenny Irwin Jr. and Tony Roper, but losing Earnhardt forced the racing series to confront safety issues it had been slow to acknowledge. □



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